

Grade 7 - Informational

Babysitting 101

Babysitting is a job that involves a lot of responsibility. Managing children can be challenging at times. You may be playing with a child who is very happy but quickly becomes upset. As a babysitter, it is important to have the skills needed to handle any situation. With the right preparation, you can become a great babysitter.

Be Prepared

Many adults prefer a babysitter who has had some type of babysitting instruction. Check local community centers or schools for the availability of a babysitting course near where you live. The safety information and first-aid training provided during the course will be valuable when you are caring for children.

Before accepting a babysitting job, ask appropriate questions. Find out how many children you will be responsible for and the time frame for the job. Check your schedule to make sure you are available during that time, and ask your parent's permission to accept the job.

Be Considerate

It is important to put your best foot forward when babysitting. You can do this by being punctual. Arriving on time shows you are a responsible person and that you value the opportunity to work for the family. Adults will feel more confident about leaving their children with you.

At times, an emergency may arise that prohibits you from babysitting as previously agreed. If this happens, it is important to contact the family you were scheduled to babysit for as soon as possible. By informing them in a timely way, you give the family an opportunity to find a replacement babysitter.

Be Informed

After you arrive at the residence where you will be babysitting, communicate with an adult. Ask for the phone number of the destination or a cell phone number where the adult can be reached. Be sure to get an alternate emergency contact number in case you are unable to reach an adult family member.

Make sure you clearly understand your responsibilities and the adult's expectations. Ask about special needs or concerns of the children. Make note of any allergies or medical conditions of the children you will be caring for. Find out the children's routines for such activities as doing homework, eating a meal or snack, or preparation for bedtime. Ask whether any areas of the house are off-limits to children.

Before you are left alone with the children, ask to tour the home. Make sure you know the location of outside doors and ask permission to lock them. You should also know the location of light switches and how to operate any appliance you are asked to use.

Be Active and Organized

A babysitting kit is a useful tool for entertaining children. The kit can be a small suitcase or a shopping bag in which you have craft items, board games, books, movies, and other things children will enjoy. If you are giving the children your full attention, accidents are less likely to happen. Busy children will get into less trouble than bored children. Have fun! If you enjoy your job as a babysitter, the children will have a good experience as well.

Children may try to convince you to diverge from the normal routine by allowing them to have a later bedtime. By following the family's routine, you show children that you respect the rules. You also demonstrate to the children that you expect them to listen and follow directions. When you follow the family's routine, you make the children feel more comfortable because they know what is expected. Fewer behavior problems are likely to occur when clear and consistent expectations are given.

Be Responsible

Make every attempt to leave the house in the same condition as when you arrived. If toys have been scattered on the floor, encourage the children to put them away. Clean any dishes that were used for eating and tidy up any other areas that have been disorganized.

At the end of the experience, provide a summary. Make the family aware of any problems or concerns you encountered while taking care of the children. Answer the family's questions, and ask if they have any suggestions of ways you might improve your services. Your behavior shows that you are a responsible babysitter with whom adults feel comfortable entrusting the care of their children. Good job!

My Babysitting Kit

